Volume 16, No. 7 November 2005 F R E E

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Established in 1990, by the Thurston County Rainbow Coalition.

Arlington Northwest Memorial, sponsored by Veterans For Peace - Chapter 109, 10/16/2005 *Phto by Robert Whitlock -*

There's a new soldier in town

by David Lynn

"Support the Troops," is a slogan no longer held captive by ultra-conservatives who believe if you do not support the war in Iraq, you do not support our troops. In reality, supporting our troops means working to end the war and bringing all of our military personnel safely home, as well as honoring soldiers refusing to participate in the Iraq war -a war that more than 50 percent of Americans no longer believe in.

Although Alabama-born and Tennessee-raised Sgt. Kevin Benderman served with distinction in Iraq during the initial invasion of 2003, when Benderman was tapped for a second tour late last year, he chose the moral high ground over further participation in a war he could no longer defend. As a result of his moral convictions, Benderman was criminally convicted at Fort Stewart, Georgia, landing him recently in the Fort Lewis stockade serving a 15-month sentence for "missing movement." Benderman also lost his hard-earned Sgt. stripes and upon release from prison, will be branded with a dishonorable discharge.

Benderman received two Army Commendation Medals during his first tour in Iraq because, among a list of other attributes, he served with "distinction." Medals aside, the reality of serving in Iraq is seared into Benderman's conscience. After witnessing a pack of dogs savage the bodies of dead Iraqi men, women and children and after hearing an officer's order not to care for a young girl screaming in pain from severe burns, Benderman would never be the same. Those experiences changed his values, morals and conscience. Ask any war veteran and most will acknowledge a similar path.

"I spent six months over there, and I came back and thought about it. What I know is that it's inhumane. It's turning 18-year-old men and women into soulless people," Benderman has stated. "I went to war, I never ran from it. I experienced it and I realized it's not what I should be doing. In my opinion, it's not what anybody should be doing…"

Benderman applied for conscientious objector's (C/O) status just ten days before he was to re-deploy to Iraq for a second tour. In fact, Benderman has applied for C/O status twice, both of which were flatly rejected even though a review of his applications appears to meet all the necessary criteria for C/O status as outlined in Army Regulation 600-43.

Kevin Benderman was charged with desertion, but was found guilty of a lesser charge, "missing movement." As a result, his distinguished tour of duty is being played-out at the Fort Lewis stockade under conditions not unlike Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay prisons. Benderman reports: prisoners' families not being officially informed where they are, severe overcrowding, denial of contact with lawyers, no heat, raw sewage leaking from overhead pipes, money stolen from confiscated bank cards, female guards who routinely watch male prisoners shower and use toilets and an exposed prostitution ring resulting in only minor disciplinary action.

According to an Amnesty International "Urgent Alert" declaration, "Amnesty International considers his (Kevin Benderman's) objection to war to be genuine and credible, and also that he took reasonable steps to secure release from his military obligations, and therefore considers him a prisoner of conscience."

Monica Benderman believes her husband is a hero, a champion of true morality and so do many others as confirmed by the hundreds of letters of support now pouring into Fort Lewis. She has launched a new website which not only serves to expose her husband's journey to justice, but also offers a one-stop shop for soldiers and Marines who are interested in taking a stand against the war.

> "I went to war, I never ran from it. I experienced it and I realized it's not what I should be doing. In my opinion, it's not what anybody should be doing…"
> Kevin Benderman

Kevin Benderman deserves our support for his courage and our outrage over his imprisonment. He represents the conscience of the majority of Americans who say, "No more."

Monica Benderman's website:
www.bendermantimeline.com

David Lynn lives in Wauna, WA. He is an ex-Marine Sgt. and a combat Viet Nam veteran.

Arlington Northwest Memorial

by Bob Rudolph - member of VFP109

It was to honor our fallen military brothers and sisters in Iraq. For those not there, we had a great turnout for the memorial. We had a silent and solemn procession with honor guard, a flag draped coffin and 1,970 grave markers to recognize and symbolize the fallen. We went to Tivoli Fountain on the Capitol grounds where caring and thoughtful individuals placed the markers, Crosses, Stars of David, Crescents, and Grave Stones for people of other faiths or what ever their beliefs happen to be. The opening ceremony and closing ceremony were done in a true military manner with honor guard and an echoing version of Taps. This was done with military precision---well, as close as some of us "mature vets" could get it. Many people came by and looked, said prayers or said things to whomever they talk to and paid respects to our fallen military folks. As far as we were concerned during this period this was considered hallowed ground. We had an invocation and benediction with our ceremonies. We had family members and friends who lost young people in Iraq come to show their love, pay respects and honor them.

Many were very emotional and with very, very few exceptions, thanked us at VFP 109 for the caring, respect, and dignity with which their friends and loved ones were treated. Many Veterans came by and were also moved and were very grateful for this memorial and the great thought put in its presentation. These young people died serving our country and no matter how one feels about the war, they are our brave young people and will and must be treated with the utmost respect and dignity.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Works In Progress is a free, volunteer operated progressive community newspaper based in Olympia, WA. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the ***Works In Progress*** and are solely those of the authors.

Submissions:

Please send text as Word attachments. Artwork and photos can be sent electronically or we can scan them for you as camera-ready/black & white.

WIP reserves the right to publish in whole or part all submissions. For editing purposes, please enclose your phone number.

Articles may be reprinted. Please cite source.

If you don't see your issue being covered in ***Works In Progress****, it's because you aren't writing about it! (Or aren't finding someone else to cover it!)*

Send submissions to wip@zhonka.net or mail to ***Works In Progress***, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507-0295.

Governing Tool:

The following statement is part of the Editorial Policy and is the governing tool for the Anti-Discrimination Clause:

WIP *will make every effort to work with the contributor of material considered by* ***WIP*** *to be offensive in order to reach a mutually agreed upon resolution, but* ***WIP*** *reserves the right as a last resort to edit or not print submitted material.*

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"Our aim is to confront injustice and encourage a participatory democracy based on economic, social, and environmental justice. ***Works In Progress*** is dedicated to providing a voice for those most affected by the exclusionary and unfair practices that seek to silence the oppressed."

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We will collectively endeavor to be sensitive and respectful to all those oppressed in this society, and their issues. However, if and when we should make a mistake in this regard, we expect to acknowledge it and to express regret for injury or insult given.

Back Issues:

Get your catalog of indexed ***WIP***'s below. Some back issues are available in the Timberland Library system. ***WIP*** is being archived on microfilm by the UW Library.

Photo of Phyllis Booth by her son Jeffrey.
See related articles on pages 6 and 7.

WIP Schedule

Submission Deadline:
November 25

PO Box 295 • Olympia WA 98507
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Announcements

Tuesday, November 1, 1:00 P.M.

Renewables are Ready Now!

Inexpensive existing technology can replace fossil fuels now. There is no one magic bullet; but we can combine many types of small sources and savings. Global warming, peak oil, and air pollution remain problems not because we don't know the solutions, not because we can't afford the solutions, but because we lack the political will to implement them.

Gar W. Lipow will talk about technological solutions to, and the politics and economics of global warming, peak oil and renewable energy:
Timberland Library (Franklin + 8th)
313 8th Ave. SE
Olympia, WA 98501

This presentation to the **Capital City Round Table** is endorsed by the **Olympia Movement for Justice & Peace**.
www.omjp.org
(**CCRT** speakers and endorsing organizations do not necessarily represent the views of **CCRT**.)
Contact: 360-943-1529

Our apologies to Gar for missing this one last month!

Friday, November 4, 2005

Palestinians and Israelis working together to fight the Occupation

Meet friends **Ayed Morrar** and **Jonathan Pollak**. Ayed is a leader of the Palestinian group **Popular Committee Against the Wall**. Jonathan is a founder of the Israeli group **Anarchists Against the Wall**.

Together they have led countless nonviolent demonstrations against Israel's occupation and appropriation of Palestinian lands. Both have suffered from arrests and physical attacks for their nonviolent resistance.

With their movement being largely unreported in the mainstream media, they are coming to tell you their story.

Sponsored by the Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace and the International Solidarity Movement—Olympia.

Friday, November 4 6:30 PM, at
The United Churches, 110 11th Ave SE, downtown Olympia

Saturday, November 5, 2005

The Gleaners' Café at Eagles Hall

The Gleaners Coalition will be hosting a three-course fundraising dinner and silent auction at the Eagles Hall on Saturday, November 5th, to begin the campaign to open The Gleaners' Café in the fall of 2006. **The Gleaners' Café will be a non-profit restaurant modeled on Sisters of The Road in Portland**. Serving a nutritious menu featuring gleaned food as seasonally available, at an affordable cost to all the members of our community. If someone can't afford a meal, they will be able to work 15 minutes to barter for it.

The event, The Gleaners' Café at Eagles Hall, on November 5th, will offer a **fabulous dinner and silent auction from 7 – 9pm, followed by music, dance and a beer garden**. The silent auction includes a gift certificate for dinner for two at The Herbfarm in Woodinville, WA. Dinner & Dance is $25/person.

Doors will open at 9p for the dance party - $5 donation suggested, no one will be turned away…*For Reservations, please call: Barry at 705-2375*.

Tuesday, November 8, 7:00 pm

The Oil Factor
Traditions Cafe

"A powerfully persuasive film" - LA Times
"Serious and well researched" - New York Times
"A persuasive bill of charges" - LA Weekly

Gerard Ungerman will present his film The Oil Factor in Olympia on November 8.

At a time when oil restrictions are looming over the horizon and when tensions between China and the U.S. over U.S. military positioning in Central Asia are surfacing, *The Oil Factor* looks at today's dwindling oil reserves and sky-rocketing consumption. It then questions the "coincidence" of focusing the so-called U.S. "War-on-terror" in the Middle-East and Central Asia, where almost 3/4 of the world's remaining oil and natural gas is located. Gerard will answer questions about the film after the screening.

"A provocative film that everyone who cares about America and energy independence should see" - Silver City Daily Press

Wednesday, November 9

Evergreen Divestment Meeting

"Sanctions are a powerful and nonviolent means to insure that the Israeli government abides by international law and ends its appalling human rights violations in the occupied territories. Divestment resolutions are long overdue. We have witnessed the power of worldwide economic pressure in the collapse of the South African apartheid regime. If American civic institutions follow the same strategy, we could see the end of the Israeli occupation in our lifetime." -- Shamai Leibowitz

Could The Evergreen State College be the next institution to divest from the Israeli occupation? Join students, staff and alumni for an informative meeting about divestment from the occupation.

7:00-9:00pm, **Seminar II Building, Room D 2107**

Contact Anna Marie Murano for more information: 485-6036

Announcements *continued on page 2*

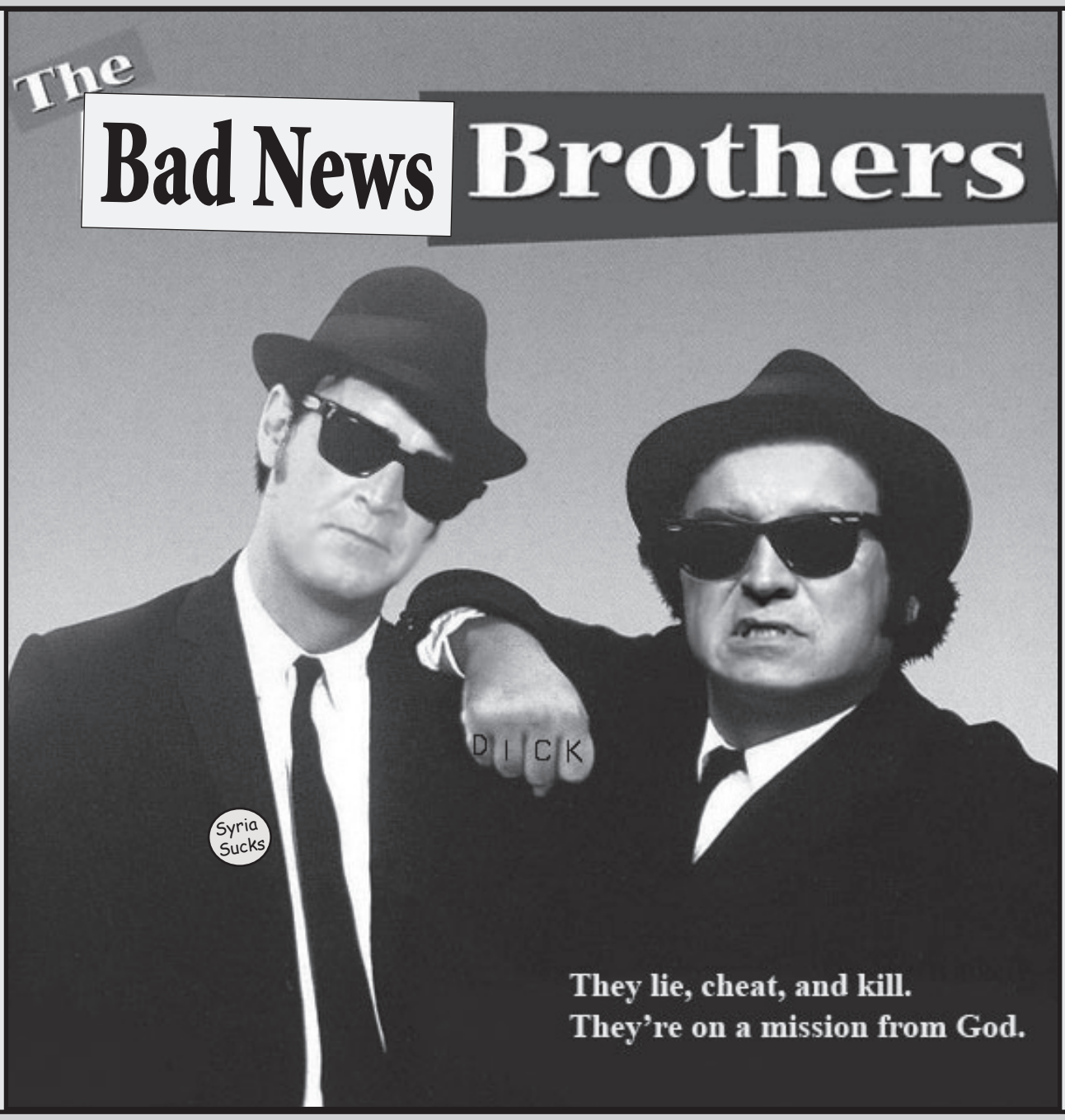
November 2005

It doesn't make any difference what he does, good or bad, God picks him up because he's a man of prayer and God's blessing him.

Pat Robertson

Of 44 detainees' autopsy reports, 21 were homicides; eight from abusive techniques used by the CIA, Navy Seals, and Military Intelligence. Their deaths were by "strangulation", "asphyxiation" and "blunt force injuries"

Source: ACLU



Here is a man who was quick to launch a 'preventative war' against Iraq on faulty intelligence and premature judgement but who refuses to take preventive action against a truly global menace [global warming] about which the scientific evidence is overwhelming.

Bill Moyers

BushCheneyiacs don't do diplomacy. They threaten war, and they make war.

Matthew Rothschild

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
President Bush said to all of us: 'I'm driven with a mission from God. God would tell me, "George, go and fight those terrorists in Afghanistan." And I did, and then God would tell me, "George, go and end the…		**1** **2004:** WA Post reports Osama bin Laden saying Iraq War has bogged US in hopeless war that aids al-Qaida's recruitment and will bankrupt US	**2** **2004:** Gregoire leads Rossi by 1,300 votes **2004:** voters in 11 states approve constitutional amendments banning gay marriage	**3** **2004:** Yasser Arafat, hospitalized in France w/ mysterious illness, is rushed to intensive care after his condition seriously deteriorates	**4** **1647:** The Massachusetts general court passes a law that makes heresy punishable by death **1995:** Israeli PM Yitzhak Rabin is assassinated	**5** **2004:** TX Board of Ed approves textbooks after publishers agreed to depict marriage as union between a man and a woman
6 **2004:** W.H. Council on Environmental Quality says Bush opposes any treaty (Kyoto) that would cause the loss of a single job	**7** **1841:** Slaves revolt on the Creole, sail ship to Bahamas and freedom **2004:** 1000s of troops have advanced to the edge of Fallujah	**8** **2004:** Rossi leads Gregoire by 2,123 **2004:** US Marines claim to control 70% of Fallujah after 3 days of a "major offensive"	**9** **2004:** Rumsfeld says military assault on Fallujah will be carried through to completion; civilians killed since March 2003: 14,272	**10** **2003:** White House response to rising Iraq casualties: 'nothing of value has ever been won w/o sacrifice' **2004:** Arafat dies	**11** **2003:** Scottish researcher finds poor people w/ high IQs live longer than those w/ lower IQs; for the rich it makes no difference	**12** **2004:** US, Iraq rush troops to put down insurgency in Mosul **2004:** School board in PA mandates teaching 'intelligent design'
13 **2004:** Sources claim White House has ordered CIA director to purge the agency of officers "disloyal" to President Bush	**14** **2002:** Bush plans to out source 1/2 of federal civilian jobs **2002:** Iraqi paper predicts that troubles w/ US have only begun	**15** **2000:** Gorton lead over Cantwell widens to 8,000+ **2004:** Gregiore has 158 lead over Rossi in the gubernatorial race	**16** **2004:** Rossi ahead by 19 votes **2004:** Arab television shows US Marine fatally shooting an unarmed and wounded insurgent	**17** **1948:** The House of Commons nationalizes steel industry in England, ending private ownership of the mills and distribution outlets	**18** **2004:** AP finds 1/3 of President Bush's top 2000 fundraisers or their spouses were appointed to positions in his first administration	**19** **2004:** WA state begins 2nd recount in the gubernatorial race **2004:** At least 6 NATO nations refuse to help train Iraqi officers
20 **2000:** World Bank reports dams do more damage than good **2002:** Bush claims Iraq is lying if they deny having WMDs	**21** **2004:** Fed enforcement of civil rights laws has dropped sharply since 1999 even though number of complaints received remains constant	**22** **2004:** FBI reports that more than half of the 7,400 reported hate crimes in 2003 was directed at African-Americans	**23** **2004:** Army plans to double service time for officers going to Iraq and Afghanistan **2004:** Bush orders 50% increase in CIA spies	**24** **2004:** Rossi wins second recount by 42 votes; Gregoire wants recount **2004:** Racial disparity in US prisons widened over last 17 years	**25** **2000:** UN Climate conference collapses **2001:** 100s of Taliban held by Northern Alliance killed in so-called prison uprising	**26** **1997:** WA State Supreme Court rules police have more latitude than other gov agencies in keeping records secret
27 **2004:** 1/3 or more of gov property Halliburton was paid to manage for the US-led Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq is missing	**28** **2004:** Study reveals dramatic 20th century expansion of US military bases and their pollution was in the same places as Indian reservations	**29** **1864:** Troops massacre Cheyennes at Sand Creek CO, end "uprising" **2004:** Bush picks Kellogg CEO as commerce secretary	**30** **2004:** Rossi officially designated WA's "governor-elect" **2004:** Bush proposes slashing salmon/ steelhead protections	…tyranny in Iraq…" And I did. And now, again, I feel God's words coming to me, "Go get the Palestinians their state and get the Israelis their security, and get peace in the Middle East." And by God I'm gonna do it.' Palestinian Foreign Minister Nabil Shaath on BBC's In Elusive Peace: Israel and the Arabs		

The Drug Induced Fog of War

by Ron Jacobs

Oct. 7, 2005--Recent reports from Washington and Kabul suggest that the United States and its client government are considering some legal production of opium in that tattered country. The reasons for this is two-fold. First off, the US-sponsored authority in Kabul, H. Karzai, knows that his government can not stop opium production without losing his position, his power and perhaps his life. Secondly, some of the members of the government there are engaged in opium production and refuse to give it up, especially since there are no other truly profitable endeavors they could undertake. (Karzai and his cronies have all of the more legal activities sewn up.) In addition, the opium industry is how they keep their people employed and also how they arm themselves.

In the Latin American front of Washington's "war on drugs," the ambassador to Colombia William Wood is urging the Colombian military to spray that nation's national parks with the fumigation agent glyphosate in order to destroy any coca plants that are being cultivated there. Colombia's national parks include thousands of acres of virgin forest and contain species that are found nowhere else in the world. As campesinos, environmental and human rights representatives have made clear time and time again, when helicopters and planes drop this agent from the air, it destroys every plant in its path. That means the farmers' food crops are destroyed along with any coca crops that might also be growing in the region being fumigated. In addition, the fumigation has occurred more often in areas under the control of Colombia's revolutionary guerrilla groups than in areas known to be under the control of the various rightwing paramilitary organizations that also exist in Colombia. Just like the US and Iraqi forces under US command destroy fruit orchards in Iraq to make their line of sight more open and deprive the Iraqi resistance fighters a place to hide, so does the destruction of the jungle foliage in rebel held areas of Colombia make it easier for the Colombian military, its right wing paramilitary allies and its US advisers to kill Colombian rebel fighters and their supporters.

Meanwhile, it has been reported in several places that members of the US military are involved in the drug trade in all three of these fronts of Washington's so-called war on terror. On March 29th, 2005, five US soldiers who were part of the counterinsurgency effort in Colombia were arrested when they stepped off a plane at a Texas military base. One man was later released, but the other four are being held on charges of cocaine smuggling. In Iraq, where alcohol is not sold in military exchanges and is becoming less available on the local market because of the growing influence of Islamic law, which forbids drinking alcohol, reports have filtered into western media of GIs being disciplined for hashish and cocaine possession. As a result of the US invasion and its destruction of social order, heroin, hashish, and various pharmaceuticals are now openly available on the Iraqi black market and Iraq is becoming a major thoroughfare for the international drug market. As for the individual Iraqis employed in the US-run security forces, a recent Knight Ridder report by Tom Lasseter quoted a US Marine sniper: "I was up in a guard tower outside the FOB (base) and a group of IP (Iraqi police) came up and offered us hash and whiskey," said Sabin, a 26-year-old sniper from Richmond, Va., who was in a Ranger special operations unit during the 2003 invasion. "That's who's protecting the people." (Knight Ridder 9/29/05)

> Afghanistan and Colombia. … It is in these two countries where the "war on drugs" and the "war on terror" coincide.

It's not that these men and women (in the case of the US military) can be blamed for wanting an escape from their situation, no matter how temporary. Veterans of the US war in Vietnam occasionally make the remark in conversations I have held with them that they don't see how today's GIs can get through a day without being drunk or stoned sometime during that time. Of course, many members of today's military are on some kind of prescription drug just like their civilian counterparts. In addition, pilots on long bombing runs during the initial phases of both the war in Afghanistan and Iraq were given amphetamines and other drugs that mimic the effects of amphetamines. According to a report published in the Christian Science Monitor in August 2002, "pilots are not required to take them – although their careers may suffer if they refuse," (CSM, 8/9/2002). Obviously, the intention of this type of drug use is not to relax, but to stay awake and maintain an aggressive posture during the long and potentially boring flights to and from the selected bombing target.

Anyhow, back to Afghanistan and Colombia. It is in these two countries where the "war on drugs" and the "war on terror" coincide. In Afghanistan, the enemy—supposedly Taliban remnants—were applauded by Washington (before they became the enemy) for their crackdown on opium production in Afghanistan. Although one wonders who the US is really fighting in that country—Taliban, locals who just want the US out, or enemies of the current US-installed government in Kabul—the one thing that is certain is that Afghanistan is once again one of the world's top opium producers and the US is looking the other way. Who knows, perhaps the US is using some of its connections in the drug world to finance some of its commando operations that it doesn't want discovered. This type of scenario is historically a standard part of covert operations since at least the second world war if not before.

In Colombia, the worlds of drugs and counterinsurgency have always been murky. Since the current president Alvaro Uribe took power, they have become even murkier. Uribe's government has extended amnesty to many of the paramilitaries that protect and profit from the cocaine trade in Colombia while his military has intensified its attacks on the primary rebel group, FARC. Washington has encouraged this development by including the war on FARC as part of its "war on terror" and by increasing military aid to the Uribe government and military, despite its terrible record on human rights. To add to the mix, the latest turn in the US campaign against the Bolivarist government of Colombia's neighbor Venezuela was the decertification of Venezuela in the US "war on drugs." This action was taken after the Venezuelan government accused DEA agents of using their free rein in the country to spy. The DEA was then kicked out of Venezuela. Of course, Washington denied the charges, while announcing that it was increasing its monetary assistance to groups opposed to Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez and his government. These groups are more than just political parties; in fact, some of their members were involved in a CIA-assisted coup against the elected government in 2001.

Despite US attempts to paint Chavez and his government into a corner as a drug dealer—much like the US did to Panamanian president Noriega before they invaded that country—they have not been successful. That doesn't mean they will stop trying. Nor does it mean that they won't try some other timeworn tricks as they continue to try and overthrow Chavez and his government. That's what is so convenient about linking the "wars" on terrorism and drugs—Washington can almost always make up a reason to take care of those that it perceives to be a threat. Venezuela may be one of the few places where they will fail.

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A call to action

Rachel's Words Live

by Cindy and Craig Corrie

October 10, 2005

When our daughter Rachel Corrie was killed by an Israeli bulldozer in the Gaza strip on March 16, 2003, an immediate impulse was to get her words out to the world. She had been working in Rafah with a nonviolent resistance organization, the International Solidarity Movement, trying to stop the demolition of Palestinian homes and wells. Her emails home had had a powerful impact on our family, making us think about the situation in the Middle East in ways we had never done before. Without a direct connection to Israel and Palestine, we had not understood the devastating nature of the Palestinians' situation. Coming from the US, our allegiance and empathy had always been with the people of Israel.

After Rachel died we realized that her words were having a similar effect on others whose lives were being changed, as ours have been--not just by Rachel's death, but by the window her writing provided on the Palestinian experience and by her call to action.

Earlier this year, when a play created entirely from Rachel's emails and journals first opened in London, we saw in a very immediate way the impact that Rachel's words can have on others. Theater can reach people in a different and deeper place than reading a news article or listening to a speech: there is an emotional aspect that for some people can be more long-lasting and motivating.

Theater humanizes; all art humanizes. It takes us away from the merely logical and rational. In the Israel-Palestine conflict there is often a very logical calculus of death and war--and you must step out of the constructs of that logic in order to construct a logic for peace.

The play, *My Name Is Rachel Corrie,* is not just about how Rachel died, even if that is why she is known and remembered. It also illuminates her humanity, tracing her evolution from typical teenage self-exploration through to her search for a political voice. The play includes some of her writing that might be considered uncomplimentary to us, and even to her. Far better that, though, than being a symbol of one dimension.

Rachel was a real human being. Sometimes, when people idealize her, we feel vulnerable for her. Knowing the complete human being, would they feel the same? Through *My Name is Rachel Corrie*, people can know a more complete Rachel.

It is disconcerting, but also comforting, to watch an actor who looks much like Rachel--Megan Dodds--play our daughter on stage. In the opening scene, when Rachel awakens in her messy bedroom, the resemblance is almost too much. But Megan lives Rachel's words in ways that are sometimes familiar but also sometimes surprising, so that we learn from her what Rachel may have been thinking. At several points in the play, Megan enacts receiving emails from us--real emails that we actually sent to Rachel. We had never before imagined our daughter's reactions to receiving our messages until we saw them on stage.

Rachel was a real human being. Sometimes, when people idealize her, we feel vulnerable for her. Knowing the complete human being, would they feel the same? Through *My Name is Rachel Corrie*, people can know a more complete Rachel.

Clearly, our daughter has become a positive symbol for people. Her story and her words seem to motivate others to do something, not just sit and talk about the world's situation in their living rooms and feel unhappy. The weekend after Rachel was killed, we discussed with old friends what we should do. We needed to find a response. In some ways we may have been more fortunate than other parents who have lost children, for the response in our situation was apparent. With her efforts to educate and to build permanent connections with Palestinians in Rafah, Rachel provided us with a path.

In an email from Rachel to her friend Todd, she tells him 10 times over that he must come to Gaza. "Come here!", she repeats over and over. That is what Rachel would have wanted us to do, too: to try to carry on what she started.

We recently spent time in the US with members of the family who were behind the wall of the home Rachel stood to protect. For a month we ate, played and traveled with 15-month-old Sama. What future does she have, living in what now amounts to a mass prison in Gaza?

The recent disengagement may provide some relief for Gazans at the most obvious level. But it is hard not to contrast the media coverage afforded to the Israeli settlers' leaving, with that given to the many Palestinian families who have lost their homes to demolition in Gaza. What has been happening in the West Bank under cover of the disengagement--the building of the wall and the expansion of settlements--is also very worrying.

And when the Israeli prime minister's close aide Dov Weisglass said that the real intent of the Gaza disengagement was to place the peace process in formaldehyde, we have to take him at his word. We must keep insisting on a peace process and work towards a viable Palestinian state that will benefit Palestinians, Israelis and the rest of the world.

Meanwhile, we are still asking our government for a US-led investigation into Rachel's killing. The US state department is on record saying that the report of the Israeli military police does not reflect an investigation that was "thorough, credible and transparent", despite that being promised to President Bush by Ariel Sharon. In March we initiated a lawsuit against the Israel Defense Force and the government of Israel, to seek justice for Rachel and also information. We still would like to know what happened on March 16, 2003, and why the international eyewitness reports differ so radically from the statements of the soldiers involved.

We still would like to know what happened on March 16, 2003, and why the international eyewitness reports differ so radically from the statements of the soldiers involved.

Unfortunately, the Israeli parliament, counter to international law, has passed retroactive legislation making it impossible for most Palestinians and others to file suit against the IDF for injury that occurred in the occupied territories after September 2000.

In the US we have taken legal action against Caterpillar Inc, which manufactured the D-9R bulldozer which killed Rachel. Under existing US law, corporations can be, and are being, held responsible when they knowingly continue to provide goods and services that are used in a pattern of human-rights violations.

The month before she was killed, Rachel wrote the following in an email to us:

"I look forward to seeing more and more people willing to resist the direction the world is moving in…

"We are particularly new at this in the United States and in the middle class. Like you said, we are all unlearning years of programming that's been imprinted on us our entire lives. We are working against massive, sophisticated, and entrenched structures of power. We are working in the midst of information systems that tend to persuade us that our personal experiences are irrelevant, that we are defective, that our communities are not important, that we are powerless, that our future is determined, and that the highest level of humanity is expressed through what we choose to buy at the mall."

Action has already flowed from her words.

Please visit the Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice at www.rachelcorriefoundation.org.

Photo by Stephen Cummiskey

Actress Megan Dodd as Rachel. *Photo by Stephen Cummiskey*

Elect Phyllis Booth to the Olympia City Council

From the WIP Editorial Committee

One of the most compelling incentives for Olympia residents to head to the polls on November 8 is the opportunity to unseat incumbent Doug Mah and replace him with long-time, hard-working citizen activist, Phyllis Booth.

A self-described "citizen watchdog" working on behalf of local grassroots interests, Booth has attended and testified at hundreds of city council meetings and other public hearings and forums - this, in addition to doorbelling, canvassing and otherwise applying herself on behalf of a variety of community issues and campaigns. Over the years, as her opponent has polished his skills as a politically cautious protector of development and business interests, Phyllis Booth has been a constant presence, defending the common good.

Booth is distinguished by the belief that decisions of local government should reflect local values. At the center of her platform is the assertion that citizens should have as much access as possible to information about issues affecting our community and every feasible opportunity to engage in and influence public policy-making.

Challenging the conference center

The campaign for which Phyllis Booth is probably best known is her tenacious battle in 2003 to stop the hugely unpopular conference center. Despite widespread opposition, Doug Mah was an early and ardent supporter of the project: an effort by hotel owners and out-of-state developers to funnel millions of public dollars into a venture which would benefit very narrow private interests (primarily, the Phoenix Inn). The project would have dedicated all of a $15 million Public Facilities District fund to the construction of the conference center and would have required an additional $750,000 or more annually from the city's operating funds for at least another 20 years.

As the months passed - and despite an overwhelming public outcry in which Booth played a leading role - a majority of the city council, including Doug Mah, doggedly persisted in plans to push the project through. Citizen response organized around the formation of an ad hoc group called Public Funds for Public Purposes, mounting a legal challenge to the project. Booth was instrumental in the formation and support of the group; according to the Public Disclosure Commission, between May 2003 and February 2004, she and her husband contributed a total of $1200.

After an eighteen month battle and approximately $500,000 of wasted city and state expenditures, and only when it was absolutely clear that the legal challenge led by Public Funds for Public Purposes would ultimately and fatally frustrate the process, Mah took the politically expedient action of initiating a motion to end the project. The motion was passed.

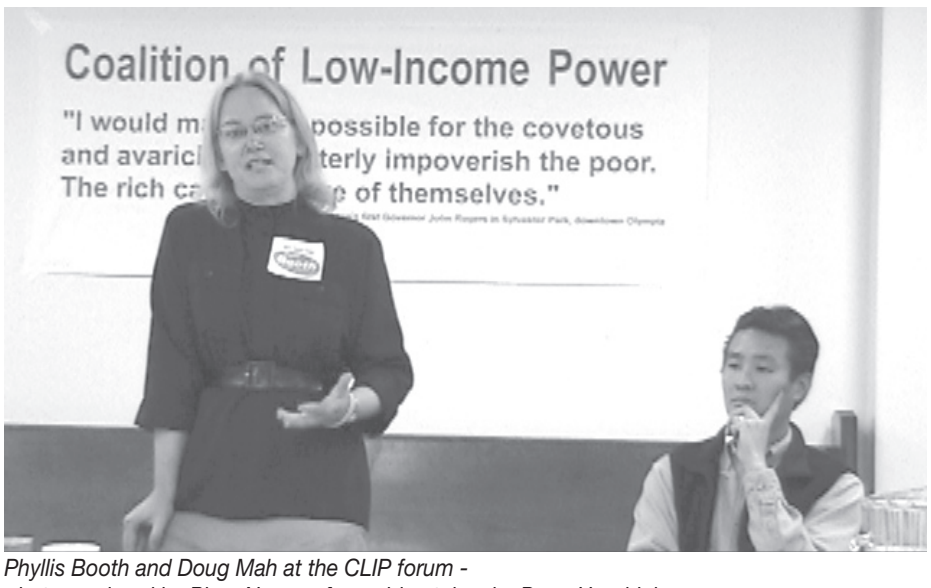
Thus, in February 2004, the conference center was defeated.

Friends of the Waterfront

In 2002, Booth worked as a core member of a group called *Friends of the Waterfront*, rallying massive public opposition to a City Council "mixed-use" plan allowing taller buildings in a nine-block area of downtown Olympia. The City, including Mah, argued that a major benefit to the community would be increased upper and upper-middle income downtown housing – all condos. Over a period of six months, Booth doorbelled at approximately 500 homes in a campaign to educate the community about the City plan and its problems.

What problems? The project would have obstructed the public view and changed forever the character of the waterfront. As well, it would have provided a ten-year tax abatement for the new condo purchasers. The "Friends" campaign posited that it is not necessary to sacrifice the waterfront in order to increase housing – especially publicly subsidized condos benefiting a relatively privileged sector of the community.

Thanks largely to the efforts of Phyllis Booth and a few other dedicated citizens, the City was persuaded to abandon the plan.


Coalition of Low-Income Power
"I would m possible for the covetous
and avaric terly impoverish the poor.
The rich ca of themselves."
Phyllis Booth and Doug Mah at the CLIP forum - photo rendered by Phan Nguyen from video taken by Drew Hendricks

At this same forum, sponsored by the Coalition for Low-Income Power (CLIP), Mah criticized Booth for suggesting that voters should visit the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) website to learn more about his financial base of support. He said this was "disingenuous" of her since, having filed as a **mini-reporting* candidate, her finances were not posted. Phyllis, sitting next to Doug, handed him a report listing all her campaign contributions and said she would provide a copy for anyone who asked.

We took her up on that. Booth's records show that, except for Phyllis herself, no single donor gave more than $100 to her campaign. Booth provided $400 of her own money, and $100 of that came in the form of a loan against future donations. Her contributors are ordinary citizens, many of whose names will be recognized for their own civic engagement in grassroots issues. (See page 9 for Booth and Mah: Top Contributors.)

> Over the years, as her opponent has polished his skills as a politically cautious protector of development and business interests, Phyllis Booth has been a constant presence, defending the common good

Campaign contributions

From the beginning of her campaign, Phyllis Booth has made it clear that she is "not for sale." Despite numerous offers, she has refused to accept any money from businesses, unions, developers and "other entities which regularly do business with the City of Olympia." Says Booth, "We've got to get the money out of politics."

This is in fairly dramatic contrast to Doug Mah, whose contributors include a number of realtors, builders, CEOs and investment groups. He also received $500 from the Olympia Police Guild.

At a recent forum, it was pointed out to Mah that 43% of his contributors were from outside of Olympia. He responded that many of these are family members and people who own businesses in Olympia but live outside the city.

[* *Mini-reporting, in which contributions are not posted on the PDC site, limits a candidate's finances to no more than $3500 for the entire campaign.*]

Local homelessness and poverty

In his campaign materials Mah says he "saved a soup kitchen" - which is true. With his contacts from serving on the board of the Food Bank, it was under Mah's initiative that a process resulting in the uninterrupted delivery of meals to the homeless and hungry poor happened. Yet, he has not followed-up on this endeavor by initiating other projects to address homelessness, such as overnight shelters, public restrooms downtown, or a day-use (drop-in) hygiene center for the homeless and poor.

With Booth in office, the underlying morality that values human services would not be lacking - that without which results in political delay or apathy that we see. Mah has the political and community contacts. But Booth has the political *will* to make something more happen for the poor. Booth can always make the contacts or the contacts will come to her under an initiative. Our fear is that Mah only does something when it is obvious to everyone that we may lose a critical band-aid to a problem.

Citizen Review Board for OPD

In contrast to Booth (as previously noted), Mah accepts large contributions from special interest groups. One of the biggest contributors to his bid for election is the Police Guild, which he unabashedly acknowledges.

The city is currently in the process of exploring new police accountability mechanisms, where the city has had to publicly acknowledge that there already exist state laws to protect officers as employees. And despite these discussions, the council (including Mah) signed the newest guild contract for the next three years – effectively nullifying any serious notion of a Civilian Review Board for serious police accountability in the immediate future. What is going to happen in the next council term of office will decide the fate of police accountability in Olympia. (Of note, candidate Jeff Kingsbury also responded to the same question that he would support a Civilian Review Board)

At the CLIP forum, candidates Booth and Mah responded to the following question posed by Olympia CopWatch activist Drew Hendricks:

Hendricks: "The Olympia Police! A two part question: Do you think they are doing a good job? What do you think about the accountability possibilities and what would you change about it?"

Booth: "I personally have had good service from the police when I've needed them. But as a city watchdog, I have noticed a number of community complaints about police harassment, particularly of homeless people. … I support a Citizens Review Board, but not just appointed by the council. I would look to other groups to say who is appointed to that board to review police action."

Mah: "I believe the Olympia Police Department is doing a good job. In fact, I think we have some of the finest officers around in this area. I also believe the accountability process is balanced between the employee's rights and the public's right to know and participate. I believe the way we are handling that is working.

"I also want to say that my experience with OPD and law enforcement is different than most. Since I am former law enforcement and have spent my entire adult career working in law enforcement, my perspective is different. We still have work to do, such as getting 'Community Oriented Policing' out there to make sure what they're doing reflects the community."

Nuclear Free Zone ordinance

From the *Olympian's* reader-submitted questions: *Recently, the City Council passed an ordinance calling for the city to be a nuclear-free zone In particular, where do you stand on that action? In general, what do you see as the role of the City Council in addressing statewide, national and even international public policy issues?*

Doug Mah: "I voted against the ordinance. The ordinance is beyond the scope of the city's responsibilities and not enforceable. I support the City

▸ **Elect Booth** *continued on page 9*

A multi-frontal assault on patients' rights

Vote NO on Initiative 330

by Susan Mills

Why have Washington doctors chosen to ally themselves with the two industries most responsible for the shameful state of health care in this country: the insurance industry and the pharmaceutical companies?

Initiative 330 was filed by doctors, but the financing is largely corporate. Together with hospitals, the insurance industry and the pharmaceutical lobby (PhRMA), they have amassed a war-chest of over $8 million – and counting.

The issue at the center of I-330 is the high cost of malpractice insurance. Proponents cite "runaway jury verdicts" as the root problem and strongly imply that rates will come down if awards are capped. Yet, most studies find no correlation between premium rates and litigation awards – which might be why the measure contains absolutely no promises or provisions for actually reducing premiums for doctors if it is passed into law.

In fact, the entire initiative is founded on a precarious aggregation of dubious claims.

What I-330 sponsors claim

Runaway Verdicts – Proponents of I-330 claim that excessive "jackpot" jury awards and settlements are on the rise.

In its *General Election Issues Guide*, the League of Women Voters (LWV) examines two studies addressing the question of runaway verdicts: a study by the Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) released in February 2005, and a September 2005 study by Public Citizen. (The references in this article to those studies are taken from the LWV election guide.)

The OIC found that in the state of Washington, between July 1994 and June 2004, the average amount per claim increased annually by 0.8% less than the rate of inflation for heath care costs. The study showed that, of the total 10,073 claims in the ten-year period, only 27% resulted in payment to the injured party. For the remaining 73%, no damages were awarded. Only fifty cases resulted in a jury verdict in favor of the plaintiff. Of all 10,073 claims, only 2% resulted in awards exceeding $1 million.

Public Citizen concluded that in Washington state *"the number and value of medical malpractice payments made to patients has significantly declined and jury verdicts have remained flat. … Rather than providing windfalls to patients with minor injuries, Washington doctors' malpractice payments overwhelmingly benefit those most seriously injured by doctors."*

A new study (similar to the previous one) by the OIC, released in early October, examined data for the period between July 1995 and June 2005. According to the *Seattle Times* (10/5/2005), Deputy Insurance Commissioner, Beth Berendt, indicated that, "she had expected to see extraordinary claims, high damage awards and far more verdicts for patients, based on anecdotes she had heard" during recent debates on the state initiatives addressing malpractice. But, "it just wasn't there," she said.

> Most studies find no correlation between premium rates and litigation awards – which might be why the measure contains absolutely no promises or provisions for actually reducing premiums for doctors if it is passed into law.

The *Seattle Times*: "In fact, the report showed there were only 45 jury verdicts favoring plaintiffs out of 10,212 closed cases for the 10-year period, down from 50 in the period reported in February.

"Including out-of-court settlements, there were 48 payments for damages that topped $1 million between 1995 and 2005, up from 44 in the earlier period. … In the February report, overall damage awards were increasing by more than 4 percent a year. The latest report shows that increase has slowed to 3.2 percent a year."

In a press release on 10/4/2005, insurance commissioner Mike Kreidler said, "The results of this study suggest that medical malpractice claim payments have stabilized over the last few years, which should be good news for physicians and surgeons – at least in the near term."

Premium rates – Initiative 330 sponsors claim that precipitous increases in malpractice premium rates over recent years are a direct reflection of payments to litigants.

In examining the question of cause and effect between damages and premiums in the state of Washington, the League of Women Voters focus on two studies: one by Americans for Insurance Reform (AIR) and a study prepared for the Center of Justice and Democracy (CDJ) in July 2005. (Again, references here are taken from the LWV election guide.)

The AIR study compared insurance premiums with "lost costs" – the amount of each premium dollar paid out in malpractice claims. "The study found that, over the past five years, malpractice insurance premiums have skyrocketed, but that lost costs rose only 4% per year – near the rate of medical inflation."

> This isn't about reducing premiums; it's about minimizing liability for doctors, hospitals, and insurance companies.

AIR found no relationship between malpractice premium rates and damage awards – whether settled by a jury or out-of-court. "The study also noted that states with caps on non-economic damages have seen lost costs rise faster than in some states without caps."

The CJD study - whose analysis focused on the "15 best-rated medical malpractice insurance companies" in the U.S. - "determined that the surge in malpractice payments over the past five years had no corresponding surge in claims payments." In fact, the study concluded that these insurers have increased their surplus over this period by more than a third, yet continue to charge more for malpractice premiums than lost costs, present or future, would justify.

So, if awards for damages do not explain increases in malpractice premiums, then what does?

The LWV election guide also discusses a comprehensive analysis conducted in 2003 by the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) of all factors contributing to medical malpractice insurance rates. The GAO found that "multiple factors have contributed to increased premium rates." For instance, the GAO cites market conditions, including decreased investment income by malpractice insurers when bond rates fall. Although it did appear that, in some states, increased losses on malpractice claims were a factor, analysis was limited due to the "unavailability of comprehensive data."

Opponents of I-330 have often cited cycles of the market as a factor in malpractice rates. From an article by Nina Shapiro in the *Weekly* (7/27 – 8/2, 2005): "*According to state Insurance Commissioner Mike Kreidler, 2001 and 2002 were tough for the cyclic insurance market, in part due to the overall weak economy. Kreidler says conditions are changing. This year, Physicians Insurance, by far the state's largest provider of malpractice insurance, lowered its premiums by 7.7 percent in the face of record profits.*"

Doctors in Flight – Initiative 330 sponsors claim that doctors are fleeing our state because of the high cost of malpractice insurance. Yet, the previously cited Public Citizen study showed that, "between 1992 and 2005, the number of doctors in Washington increased from 294.3 to 322.9 per 100,000 in population. The number of specialists also increased significantly, for internists, obstetricians and ER physicians."

These findings are based on "the number of active licenses issued to physicians in any given year during the course of the study." Physicians groups and others who argue that Washington state is experiencing a net loss of doctors have criticized this method since doctors may hold a license without actually practicing. Yet, they offer no statistics which challenge these figures, relying instead on anecdotal accounts of doctors who claim to have left the state because of insurance premiums.

(Another reason often given when doctors leave Washington state are the comparatively low reimbursement rates for federal health insurance programs: Medicare and Medicaid.)

What I-330 would do

Limit damages – Initiative 330 would place a $350,000 cap (with NO real-world exceptions) on all *non*-economic malpractice damages. It would still allow

NO on I-330 *continued on page 9*

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Her act of courage changed a nation

by **Juan Gonzalez**

The driver on the bus in Montgomery, Ala., that afternoon was named J.P. Blake. The 36 seats on his bus were all filled. The 14 seats nearest to the front were occupied by white passengers, the 22 at the back by blacks, which is how things had been in Alabama since anyone could remember.

But it was now Dec. 1, 1955, and Rosa Parks was tired. She had just gotten off work from her seamstress job at the downtown Montgomery Fair Department store. When Blake noticed a white man standing in the front of the bus, he ordered the four black passengers in the first row behind the whites to get up and move to the back.

No one responded at first, so Blake moved angrily toward the back and spoke more forcefully. Three of the black passengers got up.

Parks refused to move.

In a soft, calm voice, she told the driver she wasn't in the white section and wasn't moving. Blake told her the white section was wherever he said it was. When she refused one more warning, Blake had her arrested.

Parks, of course, was no ordinary woman. At the time, she was the secretary of the local NAACP chapter and a teacher and mother figure to scores of black children at the Trinity Lutheran Church. A product of Montgomery's working-class neighborhoods, she always carried herself in such a dignified manner that she was respected even among Montgomery's wealthiest blacks.

E.D. Nixon, her mentor at the NAACP, had been hoping for months for the right person to come forward to challenge the city's segregation laws. A few months earlier, a black woman named Mary Louise Smith had been arrested on another bus for refusing to leave her seat, but Nixon decided against fighting her case. Smith's father was an alcoholic and her family was desperately poor. Nixon worried that they would not make the best example in the press.

But Parks was the perfect figure to represent the civil rights movement. The night of her arrest, Nixon called the Revs. Martin Luther King Jr. and Ralph Abernathy and asked for their support. Starting Monday, Dec. 5, he told the civil rights leaders, the black community of Montgomery would begin boycotting all public buses until the city's segregation laws were abolished.

That morning, when the buses would normally be filled with black maids heading to work, the first bus was empty. The Montgomery bus boycott had begun, and America would never be the same again.

Published on Tuesday, October 25, 2005 by the New York Daily Times.

Associated Press Photo. "Woman Fingerprinted. Mrs. Rosa Parks, Negro Seamstress, Whose Refusal to Move to the Back of a Bus Touched Off the Bus Boycott in Montgomery, Alabama." 1956. New York World-Telegram & Sun Collection, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

> In a soft, calm voice, she told the driver she wasn't in the white section and wasn't moving.

Book review:

Emancipation Betrayed by Paul Ortiz

Review by Brian Huseby

When did the civil rights movement begin? With the Montgomery bus boycott and the lunch counter sit-ins of the 1950s?

In *Emancipation Betrayed*, Evergreen graduate Paul Ortiz convincingly demonstrates that the struggle for black liberation began long before the 1950s. Ortiz takes us from the fights of slaves for freedom in the antebellum U.S. to the struggle for black voting rights in Florida, culminating in the presidential election of 1920. Along the way, Ortiz gives numerous examples of blacks using armed self-defense to protect themselves from white attacks, rather than docilely submitting either to slavery or to post-reconstruction Jim Crow. He also destroys the myth that somehow Florida was not quite as vicious in oppression of blacks than other southeastern states. The systematic suppression of black rights was as vigorous as that found in any other state.

Was the Montgomery bus boycott the first black boycott of public transportation? No. In 1901 and 1905, blacks conducted boycotts of segregated street cars in Jacksonville and in Pensacola.

The book focuses on the effort of blacks to gain voting rights for the presidential election of 1920. Ironically, one of the measures imposed by the ruling Democratic Party to keep blacks from voting came back to haunt it. This was the law taking the voting franchise from convicted felons. Since black men were convicted of felonies many times more often than whites, at a time when only men could vote, the law worked as one of several methods of keeping blacks from the polls. Of course, this led to the decisive factor in throwing the popular vote in Florida to George W. Bush in 2000.

When women did win the right to vote in 1920, black women registered in numbers surpassing whites despite the barriers thrown up against them. Whatever the fight, Ortiz emphasizes that the struggles that succeeded were those that were *organized.*

Emancipation Betrayed is an excellent read of an important, but forgotten, piece of history.

Emancipation Betrayed, by Paul Ortiz. University of California Press, 2005.

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Mah's Top 30 Contributors –$100 or over

"*" denotes out of city residence & business = 55% of total
(What are all these Investors investing in?)

*Steve Chan: WA IT Specialist – 1000

*Lee Phuong: WA Accountant – 500
*Fred Finn: Attorney/Realtor – 500
OPD Guild: PAC – 500
Roberts Frank: retired – 500
Dave Prutzman; Investor – 500
Patsy Prutzman; 'Educator' – 500

Arthur Foley: Plastic Surgeon – 250
Timothy Seth: Landlord – 250
?Fred Goldberg: Investor – 250
*Operating Engineers (Tacoma): PAC – 250
Scott Bond: Hospital CEO – 250
*Renee Ries: Private Executive – 250
*Mary Jo Mathies: retired – 250

*John/Laura Guthrie: DOL/Discovery Tours – 200
*Jane Mah: retired (California) – 200

George/Karen Tellevik: retired -- 150

Jay Goldstein: Landlord Attorney – 100
*Margaret Holm: Nurse/Attorney – 100
*Joe Daniels: Consultant – 100
Lew Yarbrough: retired - 100
Bill/Jackie Brennan: *Physician – 100
*Elmen Spencer: Invester (Arkansas) – 100
Linda/George Lamb: BD Education/Physician – 100
*Terry Kluh: Nurse – 100
Peter Overton: Investor – 100
*Wayne Williams: Attorney – 100
Rhonda Olnick: Realtor – 100
*Richard/Emily Mah: Attorney (Bellevue) – 100
Ray La Forge: Oly Downtown Assoc – 100
*Patti Moore: Oly Downtown Assoc – 100
*Heritage Foundation: PAC – 100
Evalyn Poff: retired – 100

Booth's Contributions at or over $100

Walt Jorgensen: former Tumwater city council -- 100
Thomas/Kuniko Hess -- 100
Lynn Salerno: Retired -- 100
Bob Jacobs: former Olympia Mayor -- 100
Calvin Johnson: local rock star -- 100

2 contributions over $50
28 contributions at or under $50
No Special Interest money

Elect Booth *from page 6*

Council's legitimate duty to communicate how state and national policies may impact the community. However, we should not exceed our legal authority in order to send a message."

Phyllis Booth: "If nothing else, this moratorium will make people think about the pros and cons of nuclear energy and about such failed costly taxpayer projects as Washington Public Power Supply System and the Hanford

Mah has the political and community contacts. But Booth has the political *will* to make something more happen for the poor.

mess. When the federal government fails to act, state and local governments must. Look at the leadership of states in setting higher standards for automobile air pollution standards."

In summary

Incumbent candidate Doug Mah knows how to function in the political arena and perform the basic duties of a city council person. But his record lacks luster. He rarely takes initiative on any issue of significance; his intervention to prevent an interruption of soup kitchen meal delivery might be the singular noteworthy exception.

Our support for Phyllis Booth is a choice which favors principled substance over a calculated and buttoned-down political style. Phyllis has solid, deep-rooted democratic values. While her opponent has a record of favoring business and development, Phyllis has clearly demonstrated her commitment to defending grassroots interests and a willingness to work diligently on behalf of those interests. She would serve the community well as a member of the Olympia City Council.

We strongly urge you to vote for Phyllis Booth, Olympia City Council Position 6.

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NO on I-330 *from page 7*

full compensation for *economic* damages such as medical costs and lost wages.

But if a person is unemployed at the time the injury occurs, such as a stay-at-home Mom, there is no compensation for future wage loss - regardless of work history. Nor does the cap on non-economic damages take into account the seriousness of the injury.

Director of the Washington State Medical Association and I-330 spokesperson, Tom Curry, was asked to cite examples of frivolous lawsuits in Washington state. He referred to a case in Snohomish County which resulted in one of the largest malpractice jury awards in state history – $17.1 million. "I don't know the specifics," he said. "But I would characterize a $17 million judgment as excessive on the face of it."

This quote is taken from the previously mentioned *Weekly* article by Nina Shapiro. The article discussed the case at some length, describing a series of errors resulting in injuries which left a now 6-year old boy "unable to move his limbs or talk or see properly or receive food other than from a feeding tube. His mother, all these years later, has to wake up several times a night to care for him."

Economic damages do not account for any of the "profound, excruciating life changes that inevitably accompany" the kind of injury experienced by this boy and his family. (*Nina Shapiro*)

Limit plaintiffs' attorney fees – Initiative 330 would impose strict limits on fees collected by attorneys representing plaintiffs in malpractice and wrongful death suits. These limits would *not* apply to attorneys representing the defendants in these cases, creating a huge advantage for defendants and their insurance companies – not only in the courtroom, but also making it far less likely that an injured party could find and afford representation in the first place.

The rationale offered by I-330 supporters: to ensure that injured parties receive a greater share of a damage award and to create market pressures that make legal representation more affordable to more people.

Allow periodic payouts – Initiative 330 allows the insurance companies to pay a malpractice damage award over a period of 20 to 30 years or more. If the injured party dies before the money is paid, the insurance company will keep the balance rather than pay it to that person's family.

Binding arbitration – Initiative 330 allows care providers, hospitals, nursing homes, HMOs and insurance companies to require patients to sign bindingarbitration contracts as a condition of service. The measure provides the exact language to be used in these contracts, which relinquishes the patient's right to a jury trial if something goes wrong: *"By signing this contract you are agreeing to have any issue of malpractice decided by neutral arbitration and you are giving up your right to a jury or court trial."*

I-330 opponents argue that these mandatory binding arbitration clauses will likely become standard procedure if the measure is passed. This is the component of I-330 which a Seattle Times editorial calls "an untenable flaw." (10/2/2005)

Vote NO on I-330

I-330 is an assault on patients' rights

There's no denying that malpractice premiums are exorbitant – particularly for specialties like obstetrics and neurosurgery. The economic impact on doctors is real; their anxiety is valid. But instead of targeting the insurance industry for the gouging it clearly inflicts on them, doctors have instead chosen to join forces with insurance companies in a multi-frontal assault on patients' rights.

This isn't about reducing premiums; it's about minimizing liability for doctors, hospitals, and insurance companies. Surely the pharmaceutical industry is lending its support in hopes of opening the door to creating laws which would similarly reducing its own liability.

Eventually, as a society, we must radically reform our entire health care system. This will require taking on the insurance and pharmaceutical industries for the massive profits they plunder from our health care delivery resources. In this effort, we will need doctors on our side, not in bed with these robber barons.

As a registered nurse, I can say that we are fortunate to have a wonderful community of physicians in our region. Our doctors need to know that we will support them and stand with them to bring about meaningful malpractice reform – which must challenge the insurance industry rather than cater to it.

Vote NO on I-330.

Letter #2 to WIP

From Mayor Foutch

In the October WIP I tried, as completely and diplomatically as I could, to give my impression of what happened in City Council process on the Nuclear Free Zone Ordinance leading up to the Council meeting where the ordinance was heard at second reading. Carrie Lybecker had some additional questions, and some I thought I'd answered already. Let me try again.

But first, please understand that Doug Mah and I were unwilling passengers on the NFZ train. We were "out of the loop," not consulted by NFZ proponents and so, as I pointed out last month, our only information came from reading the General Government Committee's minutes and from the weekly update conversation that each Councilmember has with the City Manager. Possibly there are other, better, answers to Ms. Lybecker's questions.

Here's the sequence as I understand it: The City Attorney, hearing the Council's concerns about potential NFZ liability issues expressed after the public hearing and at first reading, phoned Oakland and at least one other NFZ city to learn about their post-declaration experience. with an unexpected motion to vote immediately on the ordinance, cutting off debate and any further opportunity for Councilmembers to try to explain the situation.

Last month I also said why I thought the legal research wasn't available until the week of second reading: Other Legal Office tasks had higher priority, two positions vacant, family issues distracting the City Attorney who took leave. And the General Government Committee declined the staff's offer of timely, contracted legal research. Perhaps cost was their concern; possibly they had confidence in the information available on activist websites regarding other cities' experience with and enthusiasm for NFZs.

> A lot of political capital has been squandered on the NFZ for very little real benefit.

Ms. Lybecker criticizes me for, in her opinion, attempting to "shuttle blame" onto the General Government Committee. What more can I say? The Committee could have postponed bringing the ordinance to the full Council until some real legal research had been done, but chose instead to stick to a schedule that would coincide with the end of the week of NFZ activism, symbolically tied to the Hiroshima/Nagasaki bombings. The next line of defense should have been the Council majority, who heard staff and fellow councilmembers' concerns but voted anyway to pass the ordinance on first reading. Ms. Lybecker's first article noted those concerns and asked why they hadn't been addressed. Good question.

> That's the most galling thing about all this. Any actual risk would have been borne by the general public ...

Regarding public participation, Ms Lybecker recycled Terry Zander's opinion that I addressed last month: "There was ample opportunity for the general public to learn about the NFZ ordinance and make their views known. Too bad for them if they did not respond!" What can I say? The self-righteousness of that attitude is one of the characteristics of zealous activists that drive away the ordinary citizen. Just because "we" gave a party and "they" didn't show up doesn't mean we shouldn't do a more complete "political cost/benefit" analysis when considering high-profile policy initiatives. Now, as I predicted last month, the NFZ has become a campaign issue in an important City Council race (Ref: Thurston County General Election Voters' Pamphlet, page 18). This won't be the last we hear of it. A lot of political capital has been squandered on the NFZ for very little real benefit.

Which leads me to one of Ms. Lybecker's observations in her September WIP article, that the citizen activists who supported the original NFZ draft were willing to take the risk of leaving Federal activities in the final version. WHAT risk? They were taking no risks whatsoever! That's the most galling thing about all this. Any actual risk would have been borne by the general public, through possible litigation and fiscal impact on the services their municipal corporation is attempting to continue in a time of declining resources relative to expenses, plus the potential electoral and policy fallout.

I repeat, the Council's February 1 resolution was at least as effective a public policy statement on nuclear weapons as the final version of the NFZ. And it cost virtually nothing vs. the multiple staff tasks, General Government Committee meetings, newspaper criticism, resentment by much of the general public, political and policy "fallout," and frustration of citizen activist/advocates with the NFZ ordinance process. Beyond being able to include Olympia as an NFZ city on activist listings, what has all this effort and furor really accomplished? Was it worth it?

And now, I'll mercifully go "off line" and let WIP readers contemplate new topics. I'd be glad to talk individually with anyone who's not tired of the whole subject by now.

Regards,

Mark Foutch
Mayor of Olympia

(Oakland had to retrieve their NFZ ordinance from the archives, which hints at how "active" it was. So I wonder how militant the other purported 4,000 "entities" have really been in enforcing their own NFZs….) Anyway, it turned out that Oakland, after losing a Federal lawsuit, had exempted activities of the Federal government from its ordinance, a precedent now firmly established in case law. I believe the City Manager, after hearing from the City Attorney, offered an Executive Session to Councilmembers as a vehicle for them to hear what he'd found and to ask questions related to potential litigation if Olympia's ordinance passed as drafted. (I'm not aware of any actual or threatened litigation directed at Olympia.)

The Council made no decisions during the Executive Session, but apparently the five members of the Council's NFZ majority individually came to their own conclusions. The City Manager had a modified draft available if the Council majority wished to consider it that evening. Action could have been postponed to the following week, but the majority, I assume, wanted to "get it over with." In any event it came before us for second and final reading at the Council meeting the same evening as the Executive Session.

Last month I described the awkward process that then ensued, culminating

Who pays the most taxes?

by Monica Peabody

Do you benefit from taxes? Do you drive? Ride public transportation? Read books from the library? Do your children go to school? Do you receive public assistance? Go to the park? Recycle? Use tap water?

Do you pay taxes? Washington state collects several types of taxes, including sales tax, business and occupation taxes (B & O) and property taxes. There is a notion that only property owners pay property tax. However, renters pay property taxes, because rents increase to cover the costs of property taxes. Sales tax costs the same for everyone, regardless of income. Low-income people spend most or all of their income paying for necessities, so they spend a larger percentage of their income paying taxes than people with more money. In fact, if your income is in the lowest 20%, $29,000 or less a year, you pay 18% of your income in taxes. If you are in the top 1%, $373,000 or more at year, you pay 1% of your income in taxes. This is called a "regressive" tax system. Washington has the most regressive tax system in the United States.

Why are our taxes not putting enough money in the state budget? Over the last twelve years, a series of tax cuts have drained huge amounts of money from the budget. Some of these cuts were corporate welfare passed by the legislature in the form of business incentives, exemptions and tax cuts. Others were passed as initiatives, such as

I-695 for $30 car tabs, or I-747 to limit property tax growth. This has created increased savings for wealthier citizens and businesses, while forcing the government to make spending cuts. These cuts undermine the quality of life for all Washington residents, especially those whose income force them to rely on government programs for basic necessities. During the economic boom of the late '80s and '90s in Washington, the income of the top 20% ($95,000 or more) increased by 27%, while the income of the bottom 20% saw an increase of only 4%.

What does this mean for low-income people? For the last three years, members of the Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition (WROC), have asked the legislature to pass a bill to allow for childcare for a second year of education for welfare recipients. While most legislators agree that school is the best way for welfare recipients to leave poverty, they say there is no money to pay for the childcare. Legislators did not increase welfare grants last year, even though they agreed there should be an increase, as they have not had a cost of living increase in 12 years.

What can I do? Washington is one of only seven states that do not have an income tax. Adding a tax based on income, where people with the lowest incomes pay little or nothing, and people who can afford more, pay more, makes more sense. Ask your lawmakers to reform Washington's tax system, so we can be more progressive, or even flat, and less regressive. Educate yourself. Read the newspaper articles on taxes. Get active. Write a letter to the editor. Talk to friends and neighbors.

Monica Peabody is the Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition Oragnizer.

Attend a free tax workshop

To learn how to talk to legislators and the media about taxes, come to WROC's tax action workshop on

Monday, November 7th at the
First United Methodist Church,
1224 Legion Way SE, in Olympia.
A potluck at 5:30, workshop, 6 – 8 pm.

We have on-site childcare and can help pay for transportation

Weaponsgate is a media scandal

by Jeff Cohen

I admit it: I'm gleeful about the White House scandal, as indictments appear imminent. These last days have been some of the happiest since Team Bush seized power 57 months ago. It couldn't happen to a more reckless bunch of bullies-- who launched one of the most disastrous wars in history.

It's traditional in elite punditry to grouse about how such a scandal hurts our country or our image abroad. I take a different view: If the White House is demoralized and paralyzed, our country and world can breathe easier.

But there's a special reason this scandal is so personally satisfying to me as a media critic. It's because elite journalism is on trial. Powerful journalists are playing the role usually played in these scandals by besieged White House operatives. They're in the witness dock. It's a *New York Times* reporter who is failing to recall key facts...mysteriously locating misplaced documents...being leaned on to synchronize alibis.

Elite journalism is at the center of Weaponsgate, and it can't extricate itself from the scandal. Because, at its core, Weaponsgate (or, if you're in a hurry, "Wargate") is about how the White House and media institutions *jointly* sold a war based on deception -- and how the White House turned to these media institutions to neutralize a war critic who challenged the deception.

When the Nixon White House went after war critic Dan Ellsberg, it turned to former CIA guys, specialists in break-ins. When the Bush White House went after war critic Joe Wilson (and his wife), it turned to journalists like Bob Novak and Judy Miller.

Today, elite journalists can't pretend to be on the outside looking in at a scandal that doesn't involve them. This scandal is about them -- it's about White House-media cronyism, about journalists on the top rung of the phone trees of Karl Rove and Scooter Libby, two of the dirtiest smear artists in Washington history. It's no accident Rove and Libby didn't turn to Helen Thomas or Seymour Hersh about Joe Wilson. They turned to journalists they could count on -- at news outlets that had dutifully promoted so many pre-war lies

In the past, elite journalists were up to their neck in scandals -- but they were deft about writing themselves out of the story. That can't happen in this scandal involving the origins of the Iraq War.

It did happen in the scandal at the origins of the Vietnam War: the Tonkin Gulf hoax. In pursuit of his long-held strategy, President Johnson went on national TV in August 1964 to announce a momentous escalation of the war: air strikes against North Vietnam in response to an "unprovoked attack" on a U.S. destroyer in the Gulf of Tonkin.

But there'd been no such attack on the U.S. Johnson's ploy succeeded because major news media reported official lies as absolute truth. The next day's headline in the Washington Post spoke of North Vietnam's "New Aggression." *The New York Times* reported of U.S. "retaliatory action" and editorialized in support of Johnson and his "somber facts."

When the truth on Tonkin came out years later, blame focused on the White House, not the media. In 1998, my colleague Norman Solomon interviewed former *Washington Post* reporter Murrey Marder, who'd written much of the paper's credulous Tonkin coverage. He expressed deep regret. Asked if the Post ever retracted its Tonkin reporting, Marder said: "I can assure you that there was never any retraction." He added: "If you were making a retraction, you'd have to make a retraction of virtually everyone's entire coverage of the Vietnam War."

> They turned to journalists they could count on -- at news outlets that had dutifully promoted so many pre-war lies

Around the same time as the Tonkin hoax, another national scandal was occurring: the FBI was waging a vicious campaign to "neutralize" Martin Luther King, Jr. In its efforts to Commie-bait King and expose his extramarital affairs, the Bureau sought the help of powerful journalists, who were shown photos, tapes and bedroom transcripts derived from FBI voyeurism. Dozens of reporters, editors and publishers knew the Bureau was tracking King day and night, but none blew the whistle. (To journalists, J. Edgar Hoover was apparently an even more imposing figure than Karl Rove.)

When the FBI's anti-King operation became public years later, journalists largely avoided scrutiny of their own role. But in the words of black novelist John A. Williams, they'd been the FBI's "silent partners."

Decades have passed since the scandals of Vietnam and J. Edgar Hoover. But the cozy relationships between the elites of media and government persist -- to the point where we can't tell today whether officials are journalists' sources, or vice versa. In the current scandal, thankfully, it's impossible for mainstream media to pretend the scandal doesn't involve them.

PS. Friday's *Wall Street Journal* reports that the special prosecutor may charge White House officials "with leaking garden-variety classified information" under the vaguely-worded, rarely-used 1917 Espionage Act prohibiting disclosure of "national defense" information. If so, glee may turn to gloom. Since too much is classified, such a prosecution would chill legitimate whistle-blowers, not the Roves and Libbys.

Published on Monday, October 24, 2005 by CommonDreams.org. Jeff Cohen is founder of the media watch group FAIR.

Announcements, cont. from page 2

Sunday, November 13th 7PM

Film: Robert Greenwald's, :"Walmart: The High Cost of Low Price"

Olympia High School Performing Arts Lecture Hall

1302 North St Tumwater (NOTE: Park on Carlyon Ave side of the school)

Free and Open to the Public : Discussion will Afollow the film

WAL-MART: The High Cost of Low Price takes the viewer on a deeply personal journey into the everyday lives of families struggling to fight goliath. From a family business owner in the Midwest to a preacher in California, from workers in Florida to a poet in Mexico, dozens of film crews on three continents bring the intensely personal stories of an assault on families and American values. This will challenge the way you think, feel and shop. The film premier is part of a national campaign which you can read about at www. walmartmovie.com

Sponsored by The Evergreen State College Labor Center, United Food and Commercial Workers locals 81 and 367, and Media Island

Tuesday, November 15, 2005

Presentation and Discussion with Margarita Herrera

7-9 pm, Lecture Hall 1 at The Evergreen State College:

From El Salvador, Margarita Herrera was a member of the ruling elite when she assisted with the formation of Radio Venceremos and, later, Radio Cabal. **She was assistant to Archbishop Oscar Romero and announced the news on his radio station.** Two of her daughters were captured by a death squad in an attempt to capture Ms. Herrera. As a result of this experience, Ms. Herrera became a political analyst and writer in support of the FMLN (Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional), and she was instrumental in drawing up and passing the UN peace accord for El Salvador's combatants. Margarita Herrera will discuss her political and cultural work in this evening event.

For more information, contact Alice Nelson (nelsona@evergreen.edu) or Bill Ransom (ransomb@evergreen.edu).

Friday, November 18, 2005

Reclaim Democracy Movie Night

Orwell Rolls in his Grave & Rich Media, Poor Democracy

7:00 pm at 620 Franklin (Beluga Software Cooperative) and Sunday, November 20, 2005, 7:00 pm at 300-5th Avenue (Traditions Fair Trade Café).

Orwell Rolls Over In His Grave is a documentary about America's media. From the very size of the media monopolies and how they got that way to who decides what gets on the air and what doesn't. www.orwellrollsin hisgrave.com

Rich Media, Poor Democracy is an interview with Robert McChesney about how corporate controlled media distorts democracy. *"The media serve the interests of state and corporate power, which are closely interlinked, framing their reporting and analysis in a manner supportive of established privilege and limiting debate and discussion accordingly."* Noam Chomsky,

Wednesday, November 23, 2005

Sustaining Fund Fall Deadline

The Community Sustaining Fund of Thurston County is pleased to announce our Fall 2005 grant cycle. Grant applications are now available to groups and individuals interested in progressive community oriented activities.

The deadline for submitting grant applications is Wednesday, November 23, 2005.

Grant criteria and application forms are available on request from Traditions Fair Trade (5th and Water St., Olympia); or www.taditionsfairtrade.com

Friday, December 2, 2005

An Action Forum entitled

"Developing Real Solutions to Global Warming"

will be held at Climate Solutions new office,

219 Legion Way SW (near Capital Lake) on December 2nd, from 6:30pm to 8:30pm.

Speakers will include **Paul Horton, Executive Director of Climate Solutions** and others. This is the kick-off event aimed at forming a local and statewide coalition of climate change activists and groups under the umbrella of the national Climate Crisis Coalition (CCC) www.climatesolutions.org

We aim to be part of the growing movement to pressure government bodies and businesses to make the necessary changes needed to **ameliorate and reverse the developing impacts of Global Warming**. This event corresponds to the international mobilizations being organized by the "USA Join the World" coalition coinciding with the meeting in Montreal, Canada where the signatore nations to the Kyoto Agreements are meeting that week.

For more info, contact Chris Stegman at 705-3528 or Kitty Gillespie at 357-5478.

Saturday, December 3, 2005

Call to Artists!

The Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition is seeking donations of art and crafts for our winter fundraiser to support WROC's work with low-income families.

ArtWROC is celebration and sale of the work of local artists. 100% of the proceeds benefit WROC. Artists may keep up to 50% of the proceeds.

ArtWROC

Saturday, December 3rd

Bryce's Barbershop

118 E. 4th Avenue

To donate your work contact WROC at

701 Franklin Street SE, Olympia WA 98501

Phone: 360-352-9716 -or- Toll free at 1-866-343-9716

email: wrocoly@wroc.org Web: www.wroc.org

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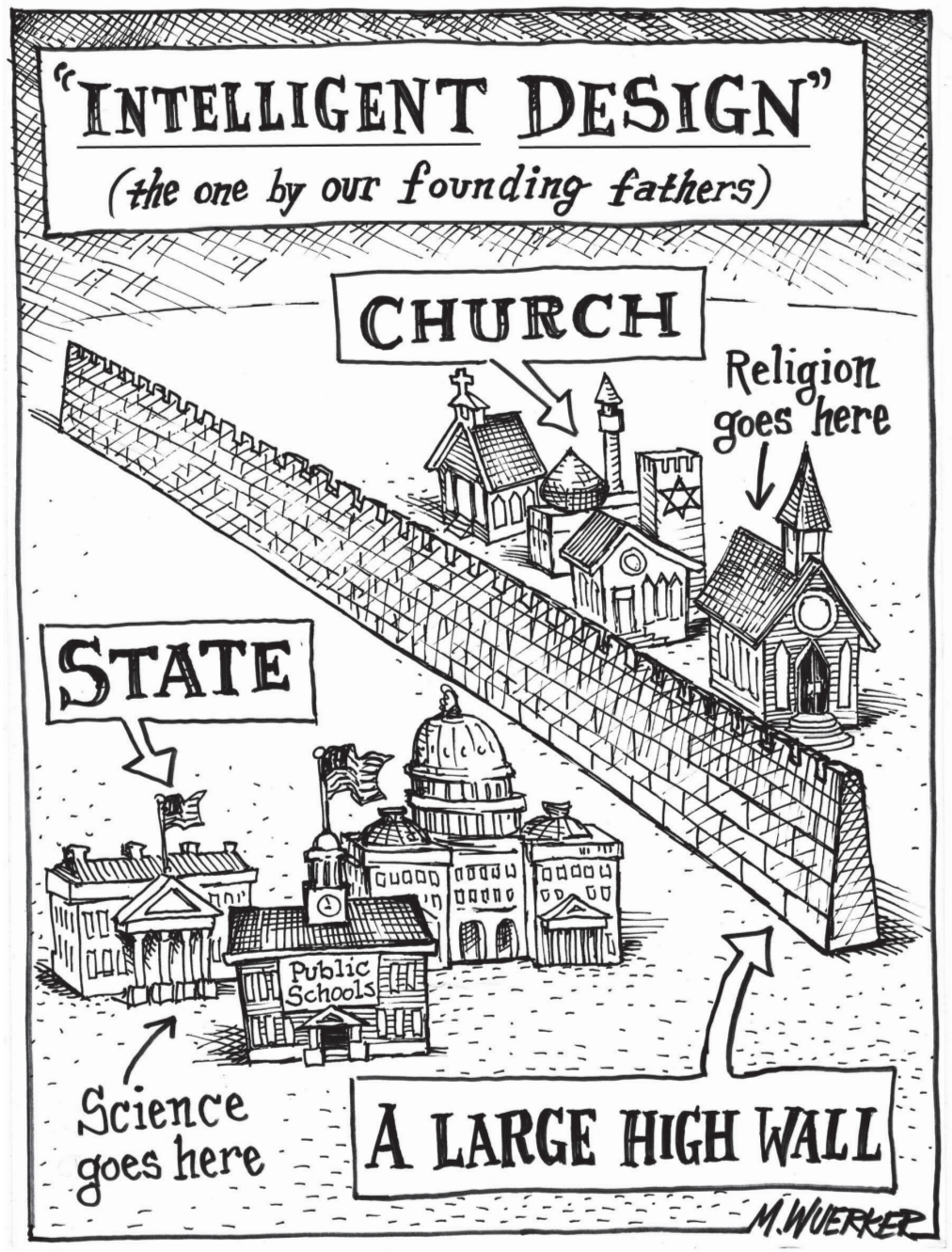
Works in Progress
P.O. Box 295
Olympia, WA 98507



Phyllis Booth

YES on *Phyllis Booth* for Olympia City Council

NO on I-330!